

burden he would have to bear, Roosevelt replied: "I shall enjoy every minute of it." This has always been Churchill's attitude, too. Such men embrace high responsibility like lovers.

AN "UNCLUBABLE MAN"

THE LIFE AND ACTIVITY OF SIR JOHN HAWKINS, by Percy A. Scholes, Oxford University Press, English price, 35s.

STUDENTS of the history of music are already deeply in debt to Dr. Scholes for many learned works, among them the *Oxford Companion to Music* and the *Life of the great Dr. Burney*. Dr. Scholes has now turned his 18th Century researches to the second of that century's historians of music, Hawkins as a writer was discursive and voluminous, and wrote in too many fields to be accepted as an expert in any. Five volumes on the history of music, a 600-page life of Dr. Johnson, editions of Johnson and *The Compleat Angler*, pamphlets on prison reform, and innumerable articles make a formidable amount of print to be written in the intervals of the life of a busy magistrate. Dr. Scholes has manfully coped with the evidence for this massive and dispersed activity, fighting a rearguard action all the while against Hawkins's detractors both in the 18th Century and later. The result is a book which in some ways has the same kind of discursiveness as the writings of his subject. It is difficult to make a unified biography of a man who could hardly be said to have a unified career.

Hawkins was an honourable and public-spirited man, but a considerable quarreller. He bickered with his rival historian Dr. Burney; he was so rude to Burke that he had to leave Dr. Johnson's famous literary club; he threw George Steevens, the editor of Shakespeare, out of his house. "A very unclubable man," was Johnson's verdict. But when Johnson was sick, it was to Hawkins he turned. Hawkins drew up his will, and became one of his executors. There are times when a man of honour and ability is needed rather than a good fellow.

Dr. Scholes has described his life and works with his usual care and scholarship, and there are plenty of good stories for the lover of gossip. The picture of the Hawkins family hastily emptying their house of books and furniture and leaving the empty shell for the Gordon rioters to wreck is a lively piece of writing. Scholars will probably read the book for the light it casts on their own speciality, whether music, social history, or literature. In spite of its detail and length, I found myself asking for more on mine. Hawkins contributed considerably to 18th Century

"THE CURVE AND THE TUSK," a new book by the South African novelist Stuart Cloete, is to be discussed by Jim Henderson (below) in ZB Book Review on July 5. Four more books are to be examined in the same programme: "The Golden Thread," by Louis de Wohl (reviewer M. K. Joseph); "The Sojourner," by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings (Dorothy Eden); "Happy for the Child," by Robin Jenkins, and "Love's a Man of War," by Violet Dean (Nelle Scanlan). Chairman of the session for July will be R. M. Burdon.



Spencer Digby

annotations of Shakespeare. Some of his contributions were quoted in editions for over a century. Little information on this is given by the author. But this is a minor complaint. The book is a solid contribution to our growing knowledge of the 18th Century in England.

—I.A.G.

OBSERVATION POSTS

THE CRITICAL YEARS, by General Baron Geyr von Schweppenburg; Allan Wingate, English price, 22 6s.

FROM April, 1933, to October, 1937, General von Schweppenburg was the German military attaché in London, the first to hold that appointment since the 1914-18 war. From this observation post he sent frequent warnings to his chiefs in Germany about the strength of the British forces, especially in the air, and the strategic aims of the British General Staff. He made a trip to Egypt in 1937 "to find out as much as I could about the opposing strengths of the Italian and British forces in North Africa in case of war on the Western Frontier of Egypt." In Belgium, where he held an appointment similar to that in London, "it was my duty to learn all I could" about the country's defence system, "upon which offensive operations by the Western Powers might be based." On a holiday in France he noted, and reported, that roads of strategic importance were being widened to serve both for aggression and for defence.

He is careful to point out right at the start of his memoirs that a military attaché is not a spy; but he was a particularly shrewd observer and knew what to look for. However, Hitler had already made up his mind that Britain would not fight, and the attaché's warning despatches and pessimistic appreciations made him unpopular with the German Government. The war showed the truth in many of his predictions.

—W.A.G.

NOVEL IS AS NOVEL DOES

THE RETREAT, by P. H. Newby; Jonathan Cape, English price, 12 6s. FOUR CITY DAYS, by Robert Travers; Victor Gollancz, English price, 12 6s. CHILDREN OF THIS WORLD, by Grace Allen; Jonathan Cape, English price, 12 6s. INVISIBLE MAN, by Ralph Ellison; Victor Gollancz, English price, 15s.

THE novel is an art form, but it is also a convenient vessel for anything that happens to be in the mind of an author; and authors, these days, have so much on their minds. To find common ground between a mixed bag of novels—like these four—is like trying to judge in the same class at a dog show a sealyham, a bulldog, a collie and a dachshund. It seems there is nothing the modern novelist cannot do with the novel—except re-establish a firm tradition.

Mr. Newby's book is undoubtedly the most novelish—as it also is the best—of these novels. It is a pale tale of a *détraqué* pilot in the last war who waxes woozy after his ship is torpedoed leaving Dunkirk and who gets off with a woman he pities at the expense of the wife he loves.

Four City Days, brisk, tough, gruesome and competent, is all about an undertaker who carts the stiffs (the destitute and the unknown) for a big American city, no questions asked, and who does in the end ask a question about one corpse, a question essentially concerning his own integrity.

An old lady who wants to buy peace of mind leaving her money to help build a church, an irritatingly saintly

(continued on next page)

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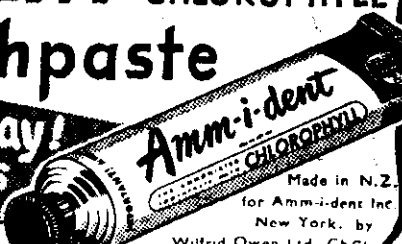
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